

U.S. Navy Third Fleet



PRESS RELEASE



Lt. Cmdr. Greg Geisen
Lt. Erik Reynolds
JOC(SW/AW) Deborah Carson
Public Affairs Office, U.S. Third Fleet

21 June 2004

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Rim of the Pacific 2004 Press Conference

U.S. and international Naval Commanders participating in Rim of the Pacific 2004 will conduct a kickoff press conference June 29, 2004. Seven nations will participate in the region's largest international maritime exercise scheduled June 29 through July 27 in the waters around the Hawaiian Islands.

Vice Adm. Michael McCabe, Commander, U.S. Third Fleet, is responsible for overall exercise coordination, and will be joined at the press conference by international leadership from other participating nations, as well as U.S. flag officers charged with the tactical execution of exercise events. The press conference will be hosted by U.S. Pacific Fleet, and will be conducted via video teleconference to media in San Diego and Washington, D.C.

This year's exercise is the 19th in a series of RIMPAC exercises conducted periodically since 1971. Over 40 ships, 7 submarines, over 100 aircraft and almost 18,000 Sailors, Airmen, Marines, Soldiers and Coastguardsmen will participate in RIMPAC training operations this summer. U.S. Navy warships, minesweepers, submarines, Marines and aircraft squadrons from San Diego and Pearl Harbor will participate in the exercise.

RIMPAC 2004 brings together maritime forces from six Pacific Rim nations (Australia, Canada, Chile, Japan, Republic of Korea, and the United States) along with the United Kingdom. Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force units will participate in bi-lateral training with U.S. units.

RIMPAC is intended to enhance the tactical proficiency of participating units in a wide array of combined operations at sea. By enhancing interoperability, RIMPAC helps promote stability in the Pacific Rim region to the benefit of all participating nations. This year's exercise participants includes a wide variety of surface combatant ships, submarines, tactical aircraft, and amphibious forces. The exercise will include training in tactical proficiency, non-combatant evacuation operations, amphibious assault, anti-submarine warfare and humanitarian assistance. Individual units remain under operational control of their respective national commanders throughout the exercise.

(Continued)



Key training objectives for RIMPAC 2004 include enhanced command and control structure among the exercise participants, LINK connectivity, maintenance of a common operational picture, coordination of surface, subsurface and air assets in a multi-submarine and multi-threat environment, and air defense, including standardized reporting and detection to engage.

USS John C. Stennis' participation in RIMPAC 2004 is part of an overall demonstration of the U.S. Navy's ability to simultaneously deploy seven Carrier Strike Groups as part of SUMMER PULSE 2004. As part of the Chief of Naval Operations' Fleet Response Plan, the U.S. Navy is demonstrating its capability to surge Naval forces to respond to crises around the world.

A RIMPAC web site containing details regarding exercise activities and imagery from exercise operations will be active during the exercise at www.cpf.navy.mil/rimpac2004/.

-30-

MEDIA OPPORTUNITIES: Media representatives interested in attending RIMPAC 2004 kickoff press conference are requested to contact their local U.S. Navy Public Affairs representatives to RSVP. The conference will be telecast at 9 a.m. HST (12 p.m. Pacific, 3 p.m. Eastern) via VTC to San Diego and Washington, D.C. Hawaii and San Diego media interested in participating in the press conference should contact Commander, U.S. Third Fleet Public Affairs at 619-524-9562. Media in Washington, D.C. should contact the Chief of Information (CHINFO) Newsdesk at 703-697-5342. Correspondents interested in covering RIMPAC exercise events should contact the U.S. Third Fleet Public Affairs Office at (619) 524-9562 (before June 23), 619-726-9945 (after June 23).